

Title: **ETERNAL GRACE**
Text: Ephesians 1:3-6
Subject: *The Father's Work of Grace*

Introduction:

The title of my message is **ETERNAL GRACE**. I want to show you from the Word of God that God's grace, in all its fulness and blessedness is eternal and was bestowed upon chosen sinners in Christ before the worlds were made. Our text will be Ephesians 1:3-6. The fact that God the Father's works of grace for us were finished in eternity, the fact that our salvation was eternally accomplished by him is stated with emphatic clarity three times in the New Testament.

In 2 Timothy 1 the Holy Spirit tells us that God saved us and called us before the world began, and that his grace given to us in Christ in eternity is brought to light by the gospel.

(2 Timothy 1:9-10) "Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, (10) But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

In Romans 8 we are told that we were loved, justified, called and glorified in God's eternal purpose of grace in Christ.

(Romans 8:28-30) "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose. (29) For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. (30) Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

In Ephesians 1:3-6, the Spirit of God tells us by the same Apostle, exactly how we were saved by God's matchless grace in Christ long before the world's foundation was laid, and he tells us that it was all accomplished in eternity "*to the praise of the glory of his grace.*"

(Ephesians 1:3-6) "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: (4) According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: (5) Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, (6) To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

Proposition: In these verses Paul calls for us to bless, praise, honor and extol God the Father for his eternal works of grace.

He begins by telling us that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ "*hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.*" In verses 4, 5 and 6, he tells us how he did it.

SOVEREIGN ELECTION

The first work of grace Paul mentions here performed by God our Father is the sovereign election of his people in Christ. — "*According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world.*" **Our eternal election in Christ is the source and cause of all the other benefits and blessings of grace.**

Apart from election there are no blessings of grace here or glory hereafter; but for the elect all the blessings and blessedness of grace and glory are sure. All God's blessings of grace and glory flow to sinners "*according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world.*" Adoption, acceptance

with God, redemption and forgiveness, regeneration, preservation, resurrection, and the heavenly glory of the inheritance awaiting us, all are ours, all are sure to all the elect, according to the election of grace! All the chosen shall obtain all these things according to the purpose of God

Do you see this? Preachers everywhere talk about the fact that Christ came into the world, but few have any idea who he is or why he came. Very few indeed realize that **the cause of his coming here to live and die for sinners is to be found in God's electing love and his sovereign purpose of grace.** The Son of God came here to save his people, the people chosen by and given to him by God the Father, from their sins (Matt. 1:21).

No wonder that David sang as he did in Psalm 65:4. — *"Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth, and causeth to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple."* **David here speaks of election in the present tense, though it was done before the world began, because this great work of grace is known and experienced in time.** No one knows his election until he has been effectually called by the Holy Spirit to life and faith in Christ.

Notice the progression of grace running through this verse of Scripture. ***"Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth."*** — That is election. God chose to save some in eternity; and those whom he chose to save in eternity he graciously cuts out from the rest of mankind in time, like a rancher cutting his cattle out of the many roaming the open range. They were his cattle before. He simply rounds them up at the appointed time.

"And causeth to approach unto thee." — This refers to irresistible, saving grace, the effectual call of God the Holy Spirit. Election both precedes and is the source and cause of this call. Now look at the next line.

"That he may dwell in thy courts." — Sinners chosen and called by grace are caused to dwell, not to visit, but to dwell in the courts of Divine worship. Those who are chosen and called by the grace of God to life and faith in Christ, are kept and preserved by that same grace unto eternal glory.

Moreover, election is the source and cause of the everlasting happiness and satisfaction of God's saints in heaven. ***"We shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple."*** — The house and temple of God in the Old Testament were typical of and representations of Christ and heaven, of God's salvation and our everlasting nearness to and worship of him. This is true blessedness; and this blessedness rises from and is effectually caused by God's election of his people unto salvation in Christ before the world began.

I say again, no wonder David sang, *"O the blessedness of the man whom thou chooseth and causeth to approach unto thee!"* No wonder God's election was so much on his mind and heart. It was the thought of God's election that made him leap and dance before the ark of God (2 Sam. 6:21). And it was the fact of his election by God unto salvation and eternal life in Christ that sustained his heart and rejoiced his soul as he lay upon his deathbed. God's sovereign election of his people in Christ is a doctrine full of joy and comfort to every child of God.

IN CHRIST

"According as he hath chosen us in him." — We were chosen in Christ. Election, like all other blessings of grace is *"in him."*

Jesus, we bless thy Father's name;
Thy God and ours are both the same;
What heav'nly blessings from his throne
Flow down to sinners through his Son!

"Christ be my first elect," he said,

Then chose our souls in Christ our head,
Before he gave the mountains birth,
Or laid foundations for the earth.

Thus did eternal love begin
To raise us up from death and sin;
Our characters were then decreed,
"Blameless in love, a holy seed."

Predestinated to be sons,
Born by degrees, but chose at once,
A new regenerated race,
To praise the glory of his grace.

With Christ our Lord we share our part
In the affections of his heart;
Nor shall our souls be thence removed,
Till he forgets his first-beloved.

The Son of God, as our Mediator and Surety stood before the Father as the Head and Husband of his Church from everlasting (Ps. 110:4. Heb. 5:4-5. Ps. 89:19). We were chosen of God as his bride, a helpmeet for him. It was not good in the Father's sight that the God-man should be alone (Gen. 2:18). Therefore he chose the Church as a Bride for his darling Son, to be his companion, to whom he might impart all grace here all glory hereafter. All this was done for the glory of Christ, that he might be the "*head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all*" (Eph. 1:22-23).

THE TIME

Look at Ephesians 1:4 again. The Holy Spirit tells us that the time of our election was "*before the foundation of the world.*" The gospel of Christ is the revelation of "*things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world*" (Matt. 13:35). Election was done in eternity. Our names were written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world (Rev. 17:8). Christ is the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world (1 Pet. 1:20; Rev. 13:8). The kingdom prepared for us, which we shall receive in the world to come, was prepared for us from the foundation of the world (Matt. 25:34). Indeed, all God's works for us were finished from the foundation of the world (Heb. 4:3). As **John Gill** stated, "No new will, or act of will, can arise in God, or any decree be made by him, which was not from eternity." All of those things plainly tell us that the election of our souls was a free, unconditional act of God's sovereign love (Jer. 31:3; Rom. 9:13-16).

(Jeremiah 31:3) "The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, *saying*, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee."

(Romans 9:13-16) "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. (14) What shall we say then? *Is there* unrighteousness with God? God forbid. (15) For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. (16) So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy."

How we rejoice to hear our Savior say, "*Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you.*" We bow before him and say, "Amen."

'Tis not that I did choose Thee,
For Lord, that could not be;
This heart would still refuse Thee,
Hadst Thou not chosen me.
Thou from the sin that stained me

Hast cleansed and set me free;
Of old Thou hast ordained me,
That I should live to Thee.

'Twas sov'reign mercy called me
And taught my op'ning mind;
The world had else enthralled me,
To heav'nly glories blind.
My heart owns none before Thee,
For Thy rich grace I thirst;
This knowing, if I love Thee,
Thou must have loved me first.

HOLY AND BLAMELESS

The Lord God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, "*that we should be holy and without blame before him.*" God's choice of us in Christ was for this purpose, "*that we should be holy and without blame before him.*" How can I give a brief explanation of those words so full of meaning?

Be sure you get this. The Lord God has always viewed his people as a perfectly holy people, altogether without blame in Christ. This only view our Father has of us, the only view he ever had of us, the only view he shall ever have of us, and the only view he constantly has of us. He sees us in Christ, holy and without blame, justified and glorified in him. And in Christ there can be no change.

Yes, when we sinned and fell in our father Adam, we became polluted, just like all other people; and we were born with Adam's fallen, depraved, corrupt nature, just like all other people. **But that which we experience in time, in this present state, does not and cannot, in any way, alter what God did for us in eternity.** Our fall in Adam did not and could not destroy the holiness and blamelessness that was given us in Christ in eternity. **Yet, that which was done in eternity must be accomplished in time.** We were chosen in eternity that we might be made holy and without blame...

- **In Redemption by Imputed Righteousness.** — By his one offering of himself, our blessed Savior redeemed us from all iniquity, and "*perfected forever them that are sanctified.*"
- **In Regeneration by Imparted Righteousness.** — In the new birth, the Holy Spirit puts a new, righteous, holy, and unblameable nature in the chosen, redeemed sinner, imparting to us the righteous, sinless nature of Christ. — "*Christ in you, the hope of glory*" (Col. 1:27). — "*Partakers of the divine nature*" (2 Pet. 1:4). — Paul calls this new nature "*the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness*" (Eph. 4:24). — John says this new man that is born of God is "*his seed...and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.*" Christ in you can no more do evil than Christ incarnate could do evil on this earth, "*because as he is so are we in this world*" (1 John 3:9; 4:17).
- **In the Resurrection by Glorious Righteousness.** — When, in the resurrection, we are finally brought home to glory by Christ, we will still be found in him, holy and without blame, before God. And our all-glorious Savior will present us to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy, and without blemish before the triune God.

(Ephesians 2:7) "That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in *his* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

(Ephesians 5:25-27) "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; (26) That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, (27) That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

(Jude 1:24-25) "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present *you* faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, (25) To the only wise God our Saviour, *be* glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen."

IN LOVE

It is difficult to say whether the last two words of verse 4, "*in love*," should be read as the end of verse 4 or the beginning of verse 5. So let's read the text both ways. Both ways are true; and both ways are precious. — "*According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: — In love having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.*"

- In love the Father blessed us.
- In love he chose us in Christ.
- In love he beholds us holy and without blame before him.
- In love he predestinated us unto the adoption of children.
- In love he accepted us.

O my soul, bless God the Father for that love he has for me and has had for me from everlasting, and shall have for me for evermore, that great, infinite, immutable, eternal love, which is the source and fountain of all grace and salvation in Christ! Can you grasp this? — The God of Glory loves his people in Christ. He loves us because of Christ. And he loves us as he loves Christ, because we are one with Christ!

Our Savior's purpose in all his work, and that for which he prayed as our great High Priest in John 17 is that we might be one in him and with him (v. 21). He declares that the glory he has as our Mediator he has given to us, that we may be one even as he and the Father are one (v. 22). And all this great bounteous grace is to this end, — "*that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me...for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world*" (vv. 23-24).

'Twas not to make Jehovah's love
Towards the sinner flame,
That Jesus, from His throne above,
A suffering man became.

'Twas not the death which He endured,
Nor all the pangs He bore,
That God's eternal love procured,
For God was love before.

He loved the world of His elect
With love surpassing thought;
Nor will His mercy e'er neglect
The souls so dearly bought!

DIVINE PREDESTINATION

In verse 5 the Apostle continues giving us reasons to bless, praise, honor, extol and adore our heavenly Father. Here the reason he gives is his great, gracious, eternal work of love called "predestination." — "*In love having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.*"

We recognize, and rejoice in the fact, that the Word of God teaches the doctrine of God's glorious, sovereign predestination. Like election, it is a truth so plainly revealed in Holy Scripture that it simply cannot be denied by honest men. For that matter, I cannot imagine why anyone would want to deny it.

Predestination is the all inclusive purpose of God in which he sovereignly determined all things that come to pass in time for the salvation of his elect. In other words, everything that has been, is now, and hereafter shall be was purposed by God in eternity and is brought to pass by God in time for the salvation of that great multitude whose names were inscribed in the Lamb's book of life in sovereign election before the world began. No one since the apostles ever stated the doctrine more beautifully than **Isaac Watts** did in his hymn...

“Keep silence all created things,
And wait your Maker's nod;
My soul stands trembling while she sings
The honors of her God.

Life, death, and hell, and worlds unknown;
Hang on His firm decree;
He sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave to be.

Chained to His throne a volume lies
With all the fates of men,
With every angel's form and size
Drawn by th' eternal pen.

His providence unfolds the book,
And makes His counsels shine;
Each opening leaf, and every stroke
Fulfills some bright design.

Here He exalts neglected worms
To scepters and a crown;
Anon the following page He turns,
And treads the monarch down.

Not Gabriel asks the reason why,
Nor God the reason gives;
Nor dares the favorite angel pry
Between the folded leaves.

My God, I would not long to see
My fate with curious eyes,
What gloomy lines are writ for me,
Or what bright scenes may rise.

In Thy fair book of life and grace
May I but find my name,
Recorded in some humble place
Beneath my Lord the Lamb!”

This is the Bible doctrine of predestination. I have given it to you in the very language of Holy Scripture. — *“In love having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.”* Here the Holy Spirit tells us that God has predestinated us to that which he elsewhere calls *“the glorious liberty of the children of God”* (Rom. 8:21).

- Our Father adopted us and named us as his children in eternal election before the world was made (1 John 3:1).
- Because we were adopted in eternity, he sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts in regeneration, giving us the nature of his Son (Gal. 4:6-7; 1 John 3:2).
- And he will soon bring us unto himself as his children in the final phase of our adoption. Then we *“shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.”*

(Romans 8:15-21) “For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. (16) The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: (17) And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together. (18) For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us. (19) For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. (20) For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* in hope, (21) Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.”

(1 John 3:1-2) “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. (2) Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.”

TO HIMSELF

Look at verse 5 again. Our God and Father has *“predestinated us unto the adoption of children in Jesus Christ to himself!”* — *“To himself!”* Those are weighty, precious words. — *“To himself!”* Not merely to happiness, to blessings in time, or to blessings in eternity, not to all the creation of God, with all that the whole world can supply, *“To himself!”* What wondrous grace is contained in these words! — Our God and heavenly Father, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, has *“predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will!”*

(Psalms 4:3) “But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto him.”

(Psalms 135:4) “For the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto himself, *and* Israel for his peculiar treasure.”

(Isaiah 43:21) “This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise.”

HIS GOOD PLEASURE

All this, he has done, Paul tells us at the end of verse 5, *“according to the good pleasure of his will.”*

- We were not blessed according to our will, *“according to the good pleasure of his will.”*
- We were not chosen according to our will, *“according to the good pleasure of his will.”*
- We were not adopted according to our will, *“according to the good pleasure of his will.”*
- We were not predestinated according to our will, *“according to the good pleasure of his will.”*
- We were not accepted according to our will, *“according to the good pleasure of his will.”*

Our Savior's delights were with us from everlasting, and it was our Father's good pleasure from everlasting to save us! Well might we pray continually, "*Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem*" (Ps. 51:18). In all things God performs his good pleasure; and my heart says, "Let him do his pleasure!"

(Philippians 2:13) "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure."

(2 Thessalonians 1:11-12) "Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of *his* goodness, and the work of faith with power: (12) That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ."

(Luke 12:32) "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

GLORIOUS GRACE

The Lord our God ought to be ceaselessly blessed by us because he has eternally blessed us in election, in predestination, in adoption, and we read in verse 6 that he has done all this "*to the praise of the glory of his grace!*" The purpose of God in the salvation of poor, doomed, damned, hell-bent, hell-deserving sinners is that we should be, "*to the praise of the glory of his grace.*"

There are other divine attributes manifested in the salvation of sinners by Christ. The wisdom of God devised the plan of redemption. The power of God accomplishes the work of regeneration. And the immutability of God is the security of our souls. In fact, all the attributes of the triune God are gloriously displayed in the salvation of sinners. But grace is the fountain head of salvation. Grace is conspicuous throughout the whole work.

- Grace is to be seen in our election. "*There is a remnant according to the election of grace.*"
- Grace is evident in our redemption. We have been "*justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*"
- Grace is the basis of our calling. God "*hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.*"
- Certainly, all who are born of God know that we are justified, pardoned, adopted, accepted and blessed of God according to the riches of his grace toward us in Christ Jesus.

I see a golden thread of grace running through the whole of the believer's history, from his election before all worlds to his admission into eternal glory in heaven. All along the way, "*grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life.*" There is no point in the history of a saved soul upon which man can put his finger and say, "I did that. This part of my salvation was my own work. I have this by my own merit." Every blessing we receive from God, in time or eternity, comes to us through the channel of free and sovereign grace in Christ.

"Boasting excluded, pride I abase,
I'm only a sinner, saved by grace."

Boasting is excluded because all human merit is excluded. In the vocabulary of God's church "merit" is an unknown word. It is banished from our speech forever. Our only shoutings over the foundation stone and the top stone are – "*Grace, grace unto it!*"

Grace first inscribed my name
In life's eternal book.
'Twas grace that led me to the Lamb,
Who all my sorrows took.

'Twas grace that taught my soul to pray
And made mine eyes o'erflow.
Yes, grace has kept me to this day,
And will not let me go!

The salvation of our souls is the glory of his grace! — Grace quickens the dead, enlightens the blind, and makes the dumb shout and sing for joy. — Grace pardons the guilty. — Grace justifies the ungodly. — Grace brings prisoners out of their prison-house, and sets the captive free. — Grace communicates divine holiness to unholy sinners. Grace raises the poor out of the dust, and the beggar out of the dunghill, and sets them among princes, even the princes of God's people. — Grace gives immortal dignity to the most degraded. — Grace strengthens the weak, confirms the feeble, and upholds the faint. — Grace preserves the tempted, revives the languishing, and restores the fallen. Grace brings poor vile worms into communion with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Grace brings countless millions of once poor wretched sinners to ineffable glory, and makes them more glorious than the holy angels, — and all *"to the praise of the glory of his grace."* — Not only to the praise of his grace, but *"to the praise of the glory of his grace."* It is as if Paul is telling us that God's glory is made more glorious in the manifestation of the riches of his grace in Christ. And to crown the whole, all these unspeakable gifts of God the Father are the result of his own everlasting love and his own free and sovereign grace, given us in Christ before the foundation of the world!

In its planning, in its purchase, in its performance, in its preservation, and in its perfection our salvation is *"to the praise of the glory of his grace!"* Therefore, we bless God forever, saying, *"Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake"* (Ps. 115:1).

ACCEPTED

Now, look at the last line of verse 6. — *"Wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved."* In his great, boundless, infinite, free, eternal grace the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our heavenly Father, *"hath made us accepted in the Beloved!"* What a climax this is to the Father's eternal works of grace! 1st, chosen in Christ. 2nd, predestinated to glory in Christ. And, 3rd, accepted in Christ as eternally one with him and everlastingly united to him! and considered one with him forever! What unspeakable blessedness those words convey! — *"He hath made us accepted in the Beloved!"*

Remember, Paul has not yet mentioned the gracious works of God the Son, or God the Holy Spirit. He has not yet spoken of our redemption by Christ, or our being called by the Spirit. Our acceptance is here spoken of as something done before redemption was needed.

- We were accepted as a holy people in Christ before we became unholy by Adam's transgression.
- We were accepted as justified from sin before sin was committed.
- Being accepted in Christ, we were made the sons of God before we were made the sons of Adam.
- We were accepted as a redeemed people in Christ before redemption became necessary. — In verse 7 Paul speaks of redemption as something we now have. — *"In whom we have redemption through his blood."*
- But he declares our acceptance by grace in the Beloved is spoken of as a thing accomplished by our heavenly Father before the world was made.

Now hear this and go to your homes blessing the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. — When God the Holy Spirit here declares that all who come to trust Christ in time were *"accepted in"* Christ before the world was made, this is what he is telling us...

- We are eternally one with Christ, in him as the members are in the body, united to him as the head is united to the body, eternally and everlastingly inseparable from Christ!
- God our Father always sees us in Christ, only in Christ.

- The God of Glory, our heavenly Father, embraces us and looks upon us in Christ with immutable, eternal, complacency, delight and satisfaction!

No fact is more constantly spoken of in the New Testament, and none is more comforting, than the fact of our union with Christ. The Church of God is so really united to her Head that she is positively one with him. We are the bride, and he the bridegroom. We are the branches, and he the Vine. We are the body, and he the glorious Head. Every individual believer thus united to and one with Christ. As Levi was in the loins of Abraham when Melchizedek met him, so was every believer chosen in Christ, and blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in him. We have been spared, protected, converted, justified, and accepted solely and entirely by virtue of our eternal union with Christ.

The soul can never obtain peace until, like Ruth, she finds rest in the house of her kinsman, who becomes her husband — Jesus the Lord. **Joseph Irons** once said...

“I am as sure as I am of my own existence that wherever God the Holy Spirit awakens the poor sinner by his mighty grace, and imparts spiritual life in his heart, nothing will ever satisfy that poor sinner but a believing assurance of eternal union with Christ. Unless the soul obtains a sweet and satisfactory consciousness of it in the exercise of a living faith, it will never ‘enter into rest’ this side eternity.”

Nothing this side of heaven can be more blessed than the confidence of our oneness with Christ. Spurgeon said, “To know and feel that our interests are mutual, our bonds indissoluble and our lives united, is indeed to dip our morsel in the golden dish of heaven.”

We are eternally and unalterably one with Christ, justified in his glorious righteousness, holy in his spotless innocence, perfect in his perfection, and lovely in his loveliness! That is grace. Free grace! Eternal grace! And that is the grace of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Amen.

⏏ Date: Danville — Sunday Morning — June 11, 2006
Rescue Baptist Church, Rescue, CA — (WED 06/28/06)
Tape # Y-98a
Reading: *Ephesians 1:1-2:9*